

HOW TO BRUSH YOUR PET'S TEETH



START BRUSHING EARLY

8-12 weeks is best. If you brush daily, your pet will be more comfortable and familiar with the routine by the time their permanent teeth erupt. While teething (which is generally between 4-6 months) their gums may be more tender, so brush gently during this time. Keep in mind, brushing your pet's teeth can be started at ANY age. So, don't fret if you have adopted an older animal- it may take more time for them to get used to the process, as long as you make it part of the routine, you CAN teach an old dog (or cat) new tricks!

CHOOSE THE PERFECT TIME TO BRUSH

Be patient and make it fun. Use love and praise, and try to work with your pet the same time each day to establish a routine.

Choose a quiet time, such as late in the evening. Or, if your pet is food motivated, try before mealtime, so they'll be rewarded for their cooperation.

USE A FINGERBRUSH OR A SOFT TOOTHBRUSH TO BRUSH TEETH

Using an enzymatic toothpaste made for pets, hold the brush at a 45-degree angle to the tooth and brush gently back and forth, or in a circular pattern from gum to tip. Brushing the tongue side of their teeth is less critical, but still good if your pet allows it. Be sure to offer your pet treats and rewards for them allowing you to brush. *Consider other dental aids. A large selection of oral rinses, food, treats and water/food additives are available to you. Brushing is the best way for you to slow the progression of dental disease, at home, but the benefits can be amplified by using other oral care products. Our veterinary team can help you select the right one(s) for you and your pet.

GET YOUR PET USED TO HANDLING THEIR MOUTH

Make sure both you and your pet are comfortable with you touching their mouth and gums. If you have concerns, please speak with your vet. If you are able to touch their mouth, work your way up to rubbing the teeth and gums with your finger. Follow this up with a few drops of diluted chicken broth or tuna juice on a washcloth. They'll start to look forward to these sessions.



Choose toys that are ok for your pet to chew.

Do not feed your dog bones or antlers, even some nylabones are too "tough" for your pet to chew. Your pet can fracture their teeth if they chew on something that is too hard- if it doesn't yield to thumb pressure, then it's too tough for teeth. Sticks can splinter in your pet's mouth causing pain and even infection, so be sure to avoid those. The material found on tennis (wool) balls is too abrasive for your pet's teeth and can cause premature wear and pulp exposure- so any with that material should be avoided.